

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the present amendment and comments herein.

Claims 3 and 10 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph.

Claims 3 and 10 recite a first locking catch that is produced from a flexible material. Claims 3 and 10 are fully supported by the specification. The flexible material recited in claims 3 and 10 could be, for example, plastic (see spec., page 7, lines 23-25). It is well known in the art that plastic can be a flexible material. Further, the specification explicitly discloses that the first locking catch can be constructed so as to be flexible (see spec., page 3, lines 28-29). Accordingly, claims 3 and 10 are not rejectable under 35 USC §112.

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph.

Claim 4 recites a first locking catch constructed as and additional part of a second locking catch, which is connected with said second locking catch by a predetermined breaking point. It is respectfully submitted that claim 4 is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art. A "predetermined breaking point" is a point in a structure that breaks when a predetermined load level is exceeded. The specification discloses that a first locking catch breaks along a predetermined breaking point (see spec., page 3, lines 30-31). Often, such a predetermined breaking point is achieved by

providing a small constriction of a cross section, or a notch. Accordingly, claim 4 is not rejectable under 35 USC §112.

Claims 1-2, 5-8 and 9 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US 3,834,646 to Heath ("Heath").

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a belt retractor for a vehicle safety belt, said belt retractor comprising a frame and a belt spool which is rotatably mounted in said frame, and at least one locking tothing which is connected with said belt spool, a first locking catch and a second locking catch being provided, which are supported on said frame and can engage into said at least one locking tothing, said first locking catch being able to swing about a point of rotation which is arranged such that with said first locking catch guided into said locking tothing a virtual line, which passes through a point of contact between said first locking catch and said locking tothing and stands perpendicularly on a tooth face in said point of contact, runs between said point of rotation and a rotation axis of said belt spool, and said second locking catch being able to swing about a point of rotation which is arranged such that with said second locking catch guided into said locking tothing, a virtual line which passes through a point of contact between said second locking catch and said locking tothing and stands perpendicularly on a tooth face in said point of contact, runs on the side of said point of rotation facing away from said rotation axis of said belt spool.

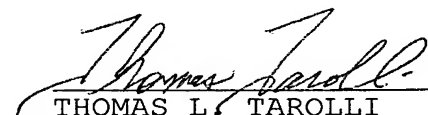
Heath does not disclose the virtual lines recited in claim 1. In the figure included in the Office Action, the first virtual line drawn does not stand perpendicularly on a tooth face. That is, Heath does not disclose a virtual line which passes through a point of contact between a first locking catch and locking toothing and stands perpendicularly on a tooth face in a point of contact and runs between a point of rotation and a rotation axis, as recited in claim 1. Further, in the figure included in the Office Action, the second virtual line drawn does not stand perpendicularly on a tooth face. That is, Heath does not disclose a virtual line that passes through a point of contact between a second locking catch and locking toothing and stands perpendicularly on a tooth face in a point of contact and runs on a side of a point of rotation away from facing away from a rotation axis of a belt spool, as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Heath does not disclose the structure of claim 1, and therefore, claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 2, 5-8 and 9 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are allowable for substantially the same reasons as claim 1 and for the specific limitations recited therein. Accordingly, allowance of claims 2, 5-8 and 9 is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in
the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account
No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


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AMENDMENT TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawings include changes to Fig. 1. Two reference points have been added for frame 9. No new matter has been added.

Attachment: Replacement formal drawing sheet 1. (Original sheets 2 and 3 remain in this application and no changes have been made to original sheets 2 and 3.)

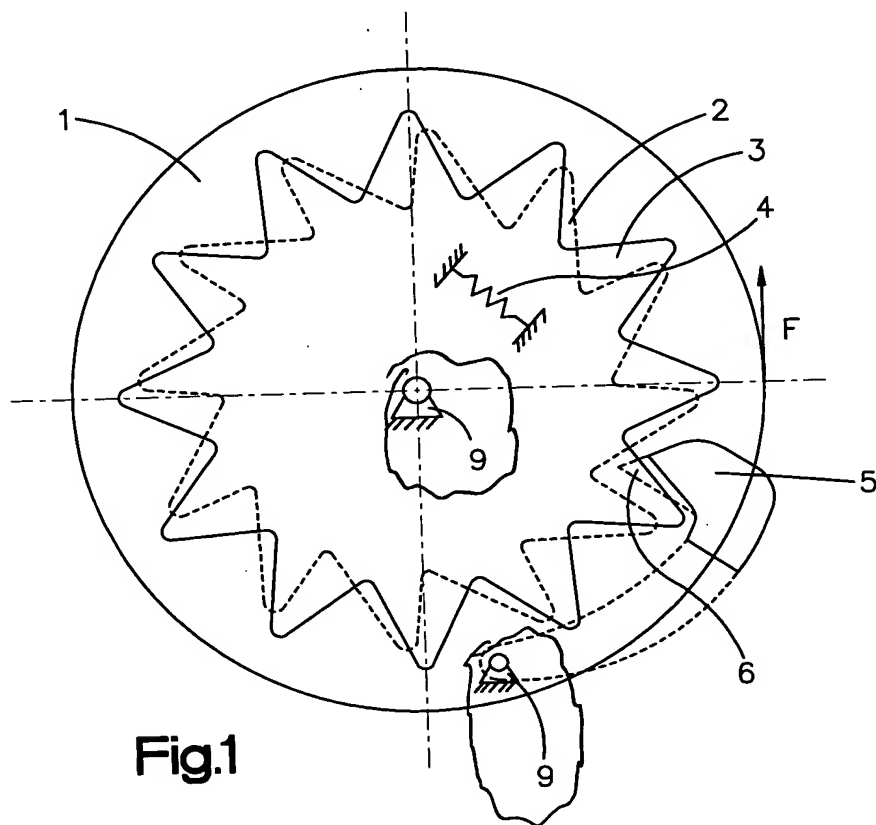
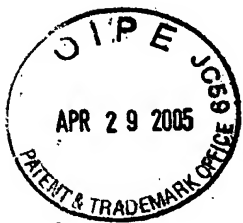


Fig.1

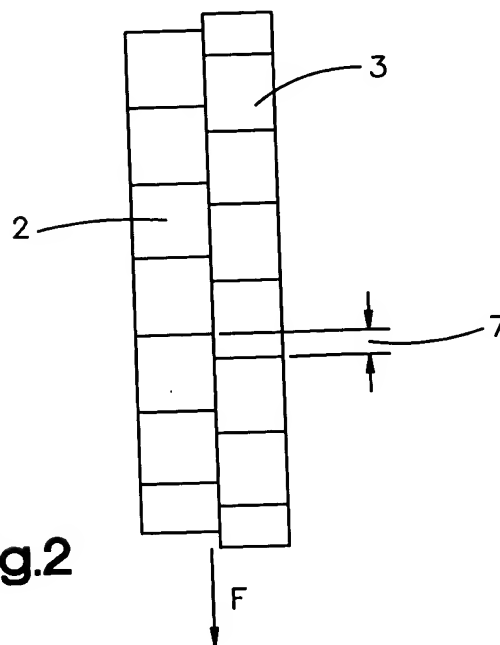


Fig.2